Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the paragraph at page 1, lines 17-21 in the following manner:

Generally, an image reading apparatus includes an image sensor, such as a CCD_s and an analog/digital converter to convert optical information obtained by optically scanning an original document into an electric signal using the image sensor. The electric signal is then converted into multivalued image data by the analog/digital converters.

Please amend the paragraphs at page 2, lines 1-11 in the following manner:

A white plate is used for a shading correction. A standard value for the shading correction is set based on a ~~reading~~ result of reading the white plate.

Therefore, if the white plate is dirty, a ~~correct~~ standard value may not be ~~obtained~~ correct. Thus, ~~an~~ improper shading correction may be performed resulting in ~~outputting~~ output of degraded image data. Further, if fouling adheres to a platen which contacts a reading surface of an original document or to a component in a light path, such as a lens, or when the image sensor is defective, degraded image data can be output, which is different from the output when the white plate is dirty because not only standard shading correction data but also read image data are affected. Such a degradation of image data caused by the above-described fouling cannot be removed by a shading correction.